

DRAFT Review Prospectus
Delta Independent Science Board
The gathering, synthesis, maintenance, and communication of
knowledge of the Delta as an Evolving Place

Purpose of this prospectus: The Board seeks early input from relevant agencies, key actors, and the interested public on the design of the review of processes underway to improve and sustain understanding of the “Delta as an Evolving Place”. The Board seeks advice on the scope of the review, which governmental agencies as well as academic institutions and nongovernmental organizations have relevant programs underway or have had such programs. The Board is also interested in the types of information agencies need, as well as what agencies need to be able to use appropriate information, to make decisions consistent with the Delta Reform Act of 2009.

Motivation for the review: The Delta Reform Act of 2009 established the Delta Stewardship Council to assure that Delta management supports the coequal goals of reliable water supply and the Delta ecosystem ... “in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place”. The Board seeks to assure that this aspect of making decisions affecting the Delta is, and will continue to be, informed by “best available” knowledge.

Prior reviews: The Board is not aware of any prior review of the gathering, synthesis, maintenance, and communication of knowledge of the Delta as an evolving place. The Delta Economic Sustainability Plan, its external review through the Delta Science Program, and preliminary thinking for an update of the Economic Sustainability Plan in 2016 provide an economic lens, but only an economic lens, on some of the values of the Delta as an evolving place.

Scope of this review: The mandate of the Delta Protection Commission is closely related to the concerns of this review, but diverse institutions and the efforts of individuals contribute to the improvement and maintenance of knowledge related to the Delta’s unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place. The Board will review the effectiveness of efforts to understand and communicate these values through an economic lens, literature, art, performances, museums, and other means. A central question is whether and how knowledge, including and beyond that expressed in economic terms, can affect Delta decision-making.

Approach of this Review: The Board will review pertinent documents, speak with experts, invite experts to speak at the Board’s meetings (available to the public), and otherwise solicit relevant information.

For whom is this review being conducted: This review will assist the Delta Protection Commission, potentially lead to priorities for funding through the Delta Science Program, help all agencies pay attention to the Delta as an evolving place, and potentially a wide range of other parties.

Time frame: Two members of the Board have begun to scope out the review, comments on this prospectus will be most effective if provided by September 1, 2015, the Board expects to have several experts provide briefings to the Board as a whole in September and/or October, a draft report available for public comment early in 2016, and a final report is expected to be approved by the Board in mid 2016.

Contact persons: The Board members leading this review are Richard B. Norgaard (norgaard@berkeley.edu) and Brian Atwater (Atwater@usgs.gov). Please cc Jahnava Duryea